

It was with great sorrow that I learned of the passing of my esteemed colleague, Congressman Tom Lantos. When I asked Tom Lantos for his support in defending a group of women who the Japanese Army forced into prostitution during WWII, I knew that if anyone would understand the pain of war, it would be him. For Congressman Lantos, human rights violations were not just an abstraction. He saw his family decimated by the Nazis during the same war. He himself had suffered through the horrors of a labor camp. After surviving the horrors of the Holocaust, Congressman Lantos dedicated his life to advocating for the rights of others. He spoke for those who had no voice through his tireless advocacy as the founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. A fellow member of the Bay Area delegation, Congressman Lantos has been a mentor to me. His thirst for justice and advocacy of progressive ideals will live on in all those he inspired during his fruitful life. Congressman Lantos will be missed by everyone who had the privilege of working with him. I send my deepest condolences to his family, and echo his wife Annette's comments that her husband's life was "defined by courage, optimism, and unwavering dedication to his principles and his family." Tom Lantos will forever remain a role model and inspiration to me. I will miss him dearly.